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Belgrade Headlines Crisis in Soviet-Egyptian Relations

All major Belgrade dailies carried huge headlines on 19 July trumpeting President Sadat's decision to oust Soviet advisers and technicians. The papers all agree that the decision was the result of Moscow's refusal to deliver offensive arms to Egypt.

The Yugoslavs, who have disapproved of the friendship treaty concluded last year between Moscow and Cairo, could not, however, resist the temptation to imply there were other reasons for the Egyptian action. Belgrade television cited the removal of Vice President Sabri and nine prominent ministers last May, as a crucial point in Soviet-Egyptian relations. With tongue in cheek, the television commentator noted that those ousted favored a "very special--a very good" relationship with Moscow.

Belgrade has been noticeably perplexed over the closeness of Soviet-Egyptian relations, privately warning that such ties were incompatible with Egypt's nonaligned posture. While there has been no official reaction from the Yugoslavs, it undoubtedly will be positive. Sadat's move is in line with Belgrade's insistence that if lasting peace is to come to the Mediterranean both the Soviet and American military presence must be removed.

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Poles Initiate Visa-Free Travel With Austria

The Polish press on 19 July reported that Warsaw has agreed to abolish visa requirements on travel between Austria and Poland--the first time such an agreement has been reached with a western country. The move was initiated by foreign minister Olszowski during his visit to Vienna last month as a step in Warsaw's program of easing travel restrictions for its citizens. Similar agreements are being sought with Scandinavian countries.

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The Political IOU's of Angela Davis--Or, Which Piper to Pay?

Perhaps the most challenging request yet made to Angela Davis to follow through on her post-trial vow that she would "struggle for the liberation of all political prisoners in the world" has come from Jiri Pelikan, the leading spokesman of the post-1968 Czechoslovak exiles. In a letter to Ms. Davis published in a Vienna paper, on 19 July, Pelikan implored the American communist to "struggle" for political prisoners in communist countries as well as those allegedly in capitalist countries. After reminding her of the "countless messages" sent in support of her by foreign communists during her trial, Pelikan referred to those who would have done so but for the fact that they had been "secretly arrested and secretly tried" and now reside in Czechoslovak jails. Pelikan, Czechoslovakia's influential television director during the Prague Spring, reminded Ms. Davis that Czechoslovakia's "political prisoners" are "communist too," and that it was on their behalf that he wrote her. Pelikan included in his appeal that she "protest the violation of human rights--the right to freedom of speech, the right of assembly, the right to strike, the right to emigrate, the right to work and study without discrimination."

Depending on the value Angela Davis places on the propaganda campaign waged on her behalf by the European communist regimes, such appeals would seem to be quite embarrassing. While Pelikan and other Czechoslovak exiles who have written Angela are anathema to the regime in Prague, they were highly respected leaders of the Czechoslovak reform movement and still hold strong ideological credentials in the eyes of many European socialists. The ideological dilemma of which "communists" to support is compounded for Ms. Davis by the fact that her sister traveled extensively through the Eastern European countries soliciting official support during the trial. The question is particularly timely since several Czechoslovak dissidents were tried and sentenced this week for distributing clandestine literature during last November's general election.



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